

PEOPLE & THINGS: By ATTICUS

WHATEVER may be the future political fortune of Mr. Harold Macmillan no one can deny that he carries the burden of supreme office with humour, dignity and high intelligence. Nor does he shrink what might be called the by-products of Premiership, thus when last week the Whipstaff Company of Stationers celebrated the 400th anniversary of their Royal Charter in their Hall which has been restored from enemy damage Mr. Macmillan came not only as the principal guest but as a Stationer in his own right.

He was so perfectly groomed that some of us blinked our eyes. That once near-warlike moustache which had been the cartoonist's delight is now a clipped, neat affair. Those stray grey hairs that were wont to point in all directions are now disciplined. As for his white tie and tails they were well and reproach.

Altogether the dinner was a grand affair. When the Lord Mayor declared that the re-born Hall was open, the trumpets shook the rafters. Then we heard the voice of Charles II asking "What is the enterprise of stationer?" and the proud reply: "Shakespeare, Milton and King James's Bible are our jewels." It was not even to those days there was some idea of a Press Council because "only thus can this balding rubbish be kept down."

The Prime Minister told us that the question of how soon he would go back to publishing depended upon public opinion and how it divided between the satisfied, dissatisfied and don't-know.

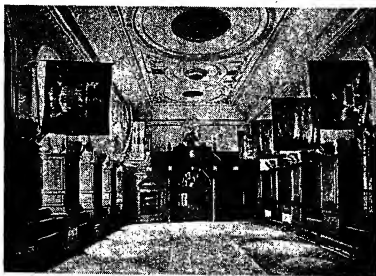
We Stationers did ourselves well on this great occasion but it was Macmillan's night.

Making Ends Meet

BEFORE we leave what the host-masters delight to call "the festive board" I see before me a reminder that in June the Ends of the Earth Club are going to give a banquet to the Foreign Secretary.

This is a club which was founded by Colonel J. S. Dodge to encourage Anglo-American relations. He himself is the very incarnation of the club's spirit and purpose, since his father was American and his mother, Susan, is English. There is even a faint Churchillian tint in the portrait because Lionel Guest was a second cousin of the immortal Sir Winston.

Johnny Dodge combines the



The restored Hall at Stationers' Hall.

strength and vitality of a giant with an immense good will towards all men, despite the fact that he fought gallantly in both wars against the Germans. He was captured in each of these affairs and emerged both times with no hatred in his heart. As a stockbroker he has a pervading confidence in the market.

I have been a member of the Ends of the Earth Club for a very long time and at a recent dinner of the club asked Dodge for the meaning of a small star opposite my name. "My dear, fellow," said the Colonel, "you are on the committee. You have been on the committee for 20 years." It is that kind of club.

The Eden Story

THERE is surely no one in this country who will not be pleased to learn that Sir Anthony Eden's medical advisers believe that his health will be fully restored. This information comes from the highest possible medical source. There may be a necessary minor operation in a year's time, but both the British and American surgeons are confident that Sir Anthony will make a speedy recovery.

It was not so long ago that the Americans were raging against him, but now they have taken him to their hearts. The Eden story is not yet at an end.

An Individualist

THE death of James de Rothschild removes from the London scene one of its most remarkable figures. As an unrepentant Liberal he invariably wore a top-hat and a monocle, and in his speeches he was anything but traditional.

During a debate some years ago on the harsh working conditions of mine-workers he startled the House of Commons by arguing that the conditions of farm-workers were far

worse. Miners, he said, were removed from the harsh vagaries of the British climate. No cutting wind, no pelting rain, no icy winter mornings plagued the miner as they did the farm-workers.

But in all things he was first and last an individualist, and never more so than when he played bridge. When he came to St. James's Club for a rubber or two his set purpose was always to play the hand. Otherwise why bother to play? It was not selfishness and certainly not greed but a carrying of logic a little too far.

But then he was most a gambler and one must remember that gamblers are a race apart. "Jimmy" de Rothschild would wager prodigious sums on his horses, although it was not a matter of importance whether he won or lost. I have seen it stated that he backed one of his horses for £150,000 and it was replaced. Tragically it was the lure of Monte Carlo that cost him much more than money. While playing golf on that charming course where gamblers revive in the open air he lost his eye through a million-to-one accident.

He remained a personality in his own right to the very end.

Commonwealth Theatre

THERE is a pleasing rivalry in the London theatre which is particularly gratifying to those who believe that the arts are of the utmost importance in strengthening the ties of the British family of nations. At the New Theatre there is an all-Australian company in a remarkable play written by an Australian dramatist. Simultaneously there is an all-Canadian company at the Piccadilly in a play, with a Canadian setting, written for them by J. B. Priestley.

There is only one discordant note. Mr. Priestley claims that

Canada House failed to give him a support comparable with that which was given to its nationals by Australia House.

In the meantime Canada is getting ready for another bumper season in her own Stratford Festival where Shakespeare reigns in all his glory and the river Avon does its best to emulate the beauty of its namesake.

A Brilliant Suede

EVERYONE likes a success story and no one can deny that quality to His Excellency Monsiur Gunnar Hagström, the Swedish Ambassador to the Court of St. James. He is 52 but is younger than his years, despite a long and brilliant career. He entered the diplomatic service in 1926, and at the early age of 21 immediately attracted attention and rose to become head of the Economic Department of the Swedish Foreign Ministry at the age of 35.

During the war he distinguished himself as a leader of many of Sweden's most important international negotiations and has also been Swedish Ambassador to Brussels and Moscow. For the last eight years he has been Ambassador in London.

Monsieur Hagström is an historical and reasonably good Bridge player, a novelist (one book) and a voracious reader of the classics. The Ambassador and his wife are a handsome pair who find much pleasure in each other's company. Would that more success stories could be told with those merits!

Proconsul

LORD HAILLES, who has been appointed the first Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the West Indies, will not only look the part but will bring valuable experience to his task.

As the Conservative Chief Whip in the turbulent years he

made such a handsome and well-talored figure that he earned the nickname of "The Gorgeous Peacock." Outwardly he was what might be described as a superior person but in his softer moments, admittedly rare in any Chief Whip, he could be strangely gentle and considerate.

Now his authority will extend to such varied territories as Jamaica, Barbados, Grenada, Montserrat and even Trinidad, where he can watch the Americans pumping the oil that once was ours.

Fortunately for Lord Hailles his wife is bred to this proconsular appointment. Her great-grandfather, the first Earl of Durham, was Governor-General of Canada.

Honourable Hon. Sec.

FOR most "Hon. Secs." a year or two of office is enough. Mr. McC. Christison has been the Minister of the O.A. since 1908; he is now 76 years old, and is known affectionately and perversely by his friends as "Old Slacker."

Last week he began sitting for a portrait by Peter Green, a friend of the O.A. which is being presented to him by Dulwich College Old Boys: all over the world as a token of their esteem.

Reluctant to see his virtues blazoned abroad ("you're not going to write that, are you?") he has a phenomenal memory being able to trot out all the "Smiths" of his many years by the initials. And he recalls in detail the triumphs of the O.A.'s "Specials," whose swimming team 30-odd years ago won a trophy so many times that one under the waves gave up.

As for retirement, he is "looking around" for a young man to take over, and has already spotted the next editor of "The Dulwich Year Book," although "he hasn't been told yet."

PEOPLE AND WORDS

We live in a century in which bunk is part of our daily bread. —VISCOUNT CHANDOS.

The Middle East is a horrid and gigantic salad of the Arab-Jewish mix of thousands of years saturated with Russian dressing and laced with crude oil. —SEARON GRUYTUS, former U.S. Ambassador to Egypt.

Parliament has not so far enacted that the use of bad language is a ground for divorce. —MR. JUSTICE WILMER.

I love Faddington Station—I think it's so gay. —MR. STANLEY BREMER, R.A.

Too many supervisors are employed on every very important Soviet Union. We have so many checks on the output of neckties

that the quality of the ties themselves is still inferior.

—MR. KIRITSCHIEV, Soviet Communist Party Secretary.

When I asked in a shop what a euphorium was, I was told that it was the brass band's revenge for the bagpipes!

—COL. A. J. MCKIBBIN, M.P.

Every man thinks he has some kind of a teacher in him—and he is right. —MR. A. N. GILKES, High Master of St. Paul's School.

The profound difference between the attitude of people at the churches 50 years ago and today is that 50 years ago the congregation was full of a sense of guilt and now it is full of doubt. —DR. DONALD SOPER.